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ABSTRACT

This statewide study concerning salary supplementing activities of Arkansas public school teachers is based on a sample of approximately 1,500 teachers who completed a 33-item questionnaire. Foremost among the concerns of the researchers were such topics as: (1) How many teachers are working outside the field? (2) How much time is spent in these extra activities? (3) What kinds of activities are teachers involved in; and (4) Why do teachers hold a part-time job? Respondents were primarily married females under the age of 40 who were married to working spouses; however few of their spouses were teachers. Thirty-eight percent of the teachers surveyed worked in order to gain extra-contractual income. Although slightly more than one-third of the teachers were involved in extra-contractual activities, over one-half of those not working at extra jobs would work at an outside job if jobs were available in their geographic area. The jobs at which teachers worked included the usual in-school activities of coaching, bus driving, and tutoring. Activities outside the school did not fall into any category except that of low pay. Outside-school jobs included child care, waiter-waitress, sales clerk, and garbage collector. (Author/JD)

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Moonlighting - Arkansas Style

by
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Abstract

Moonlighting - Arkansas Style

The purpose of the session is to inform colleagues of a study which was designed to determine the salary supplementing activities of Arkansas teachers.

It has often been said that school teaching is a part-time profession. The truth of this statement is self-evident. Public school teachers in this nation are to be found in their classrooms only nine and one-half months of the year. Because of poor salary conditions, teachers not only work part-time, but also have part-time salaries. This is especially true in states which fall into the 49th and 50th slot in terms of teacher salaries. Conventional wisdom tells us that the problem of teachers working at jobs in addition to teaching is not new to the profession; however, there has been little research to support this bit of conventional wisdom.

The statewide study concerning salary supplementing activities of Arkansas public school teachers is based on a sample of approximately 1500 teachers who completed a 33 item questionnaire. Foremost among the concerns of the researchers were such topics as:

How many teachers are working outside the field?
How much time is spent in these extra activities?
What kinds of activities are teachers involved in?
Why do you hold a part time job?

Respondents to the survey were primarily married females under the age of 40 who were married to working spouses; however few of their spouses were teachers. Thirty-eight percent of the teachers surveyed worked in order to gain extra-contractual income. Although slightly more than 1/3 of the teachers were involved in extra-contractual activities, over 1/2 of those not working at extra jobs would work at an outside job if jobs were available in their geographic area. The jobs at which teachers worked included the usual in-school activities of coaching, bus driving, and tutoring. The activities in which teachers were engaged outside the school did not fall into any category except low pay. Outside-school jobs included child care, waiter-waitress, sales clerk, and garbage collector.

Moonlighting - Arkansas Style

Teachers seem to be compelled by low salaries to find ways to supplement their incomes. Conventional wisdom indicates that holding more than one job, or moonlighting as it is commonly called, is a fairly common practice among teachers; in reality it is a practice that has had little study. In searching the literature for studies, four dissertations written in the 1960s addressed this issue (Tucker, 1965, Anderson, 1966,Gumm 1968, and Parker 1969). The salary supplementing activities ranged from a high of 65.6% in Tennessee to a low of 39.3% in Oklahoma (Anderson, 1963). Campbell (1970) in a study of moonlighting activities of male teachers of Jefferson County, Colorado, found that 46% worked at jobs outside of teaching for the entire calendar year. An Oklahoma study by Wisniewski and Kleine (1984) using a sample from teachers holding membership in Oklahoma Education Association reported that 44% of the teachers who responded reported that they earned extra income by performing duties beyond those required in their teaching contracts. In the academic year 1984-85 approximately 17% of the public school teachers worked outside their school system during the school year and 19% worked outside the system during the previous summer (Center for Education Statistics,1986).

Traditionally, Arkansas has consistently held the 49th or 50th position in terms of teacher salaries. Because of this, conventional wisdom indicates that Arkansas teachers would be greatly involved in extra- contractual activities. The purpose of this study was to determine the actual extent of involvement in activities resulting in extra-contractual income.

For this study, extra-contractual activities or moonlighting as it is commonly called includes any income that is earned beyond the salary covered in the basic contract. Two categories of activities were considered; those activities within the school system, and those activities outside the school

system. Both year round and summer employment were considered as moonlighting.

Method

Using previous moonlighting studies cited in the literature, a 33 item instrument was developed which consisted of questions relating to demographics as well as questions concerning extra-contractual activities and the perceptions of the teachers toward those activities. The instrument was first tested with several graduate classes at Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia, Arkansas. Suggestions from the field test were included in the reworking of the instrument prior to distribution.

Schools, both elementary and secondary, were randomly selected from the Arkansas Education Directory. Administrators were contacted and asked to assist in administering the instrument to all teachers at the selected schools. A total of 1546 usable instruments were returned. Geographic distribution was well balanced with the exception of the Little Rock/Pulaski County area.

Findings:

The preliminary findings which are evident from a review of the data provide basic information in five areas. Although not a complete analysis, some interesting patterns appear to be present. The following is a list of the major questions considered and the results of the preliminary findings.

Who responded to the survey?

Of the 1546 respondents, 82% were female and 18% were male; 74% were married and 26% were unmarried. Approximately 2/3 of the sample (67%) were

less than 40 years of age. Although the study indicated that a large majority of the respondents were married (74%), and had spouses who worked (89%), few were married to teachers (18%).

How many teachers received extra-contractual income?

The data indicates that the number of Arkansas teachers involved in work which created extra-contractual income is 38%. Of those moonlighting, 30% were elementary teachers and 60% were secondary teachers. This figure is somewhat greater than the 1985 average of 17% reported by the Center for Education Statistics (1986). Although a large percentage of Arkansas teachers moonlight, indications are that this percentage would be much greater if additional jobs were available. When teachers were ask, "If you do not work now would you work if you could find a job?", 51% of those not moonlighting indicated a need or desire to participate in extra-contractual income activities if jobs were available.

How much time is spent in those extra activities?

Almost 3/4 of the teachers spent a maximum of twenty hours per week working at a job other than teaching (71%). Another 25% of the respondents indicated that they worked between 25 to 40 hours each week, and four per cent worked more than 40 hours per week.

What are the extra-contractual activities of teachers?

Arkansas moonlighting teachers are involved in a great variety of activities; very few of which are actually tied to the primary vocation of the teacher. The activities reported by teachers within school include bus driving (27%), club activities (20%), tutoring (19%) and coaching (17%). Major

jobs mentioned outside of school included sales (27%), cleaning services (10%), typing or accounting (7%), and a variety of other activities. The activities mentioned most often included child care, paid church worker, truck driver, garbage collector, waiter, and waitress. Most of the activities pay a minimum wage. Other major out-of-school activities were related to business, farm or rental income. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents indicated that part of their extra-contractual activities was farm related, another 22% indicated that they derived income from rental property, and 19% listed other ownerships or small business as being a provider of extra income.

Why do you hold a part time job?

Eighty-eight percent of the respondents worked because of economic necessity and 12% worked for other personal fulfillment reasons.

Conclusions:

Respondents to the survey were primarily married females under the age of 40 who were married to working spouses; however few of their spouses were teachers. Thirty-eight percent of the teachers surveyed worked in order to gain extra-contractual income. Although slightly more than 1/3 of the teachers were involved in extra-contractual activities, over 1/2 of those not working at extra jobs would work at an outside job if jobs were available in their geographic area. The jobs at which teachers worked included the usual in-school activities of coaching, bus driving, and tutoring. The activities in which teachers were engaged outside the school did not fall into any category except low pay. Outside-school jobs included child care, waiter-waitress, sales clerk, and garbage collector. Even though many teachers live on farms and indicate that some income is derived from the farm, the amount of income

appears to be minimal. For a large majority of Arkansas teachers (89%) who responded to the survey, working an outside job is an economic necessity. Although the Arkansas legislature has mandated changes in new school standards, no additional money has been provided to ease the economic deficit facing many teachers. The reality is that greater demands are being made on teachers with no apparent financial rewards. For many teachers who hold second jobs, the work week already consists of seventy to eighty hours with no relief in sight. This is moonlighting, Arkansas style.

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